Special Category Status to Uttaranchal, Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand

3923. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that due to its backwardness Uttaranchal is considered as a State under special category; and

(b) what steps Government propose to take for granting special status to Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand.

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) The Special Category Status is given to those States which are having a strategic location on the border with neighbouring countries, hilly terrain, inadequate economic and social infrastructure, predominantly large tribal population and limited & weak resource base compared to development needs. Since, the State of Uttaranchal fulfills these features, the 49th Meeting of the National Development Council (NDC) held on September 1, 2001 unanimously endorsed the decision to grant special Category Status to Uttaranchal.

(b) Since the States of Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand do not have all these features, they are not included under Special Category States. However, the said meeting of the NDC decided that suggestions made before it for looking into the criteria for granting Special Category Status to States should be examined.

Special Packages for NER and Kashmir

3924. DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether special packages declared for NER and Kashmir are part of normal Five Year Plan or it is additional;

(b) whether Government have decided to implement these programmes only with 10 per cent budgetary allocation for NER;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the project-wise sources of additional resources already

mobilized and to be mobilized for assuring time-bound implementation thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) to (d) As regards North Eastern Region (NER), an Agenda for Socio-economic Development of North Eastern States and Sikkim was announced by the Prime Minister at Shillong on 22nd January, 2000. The financial requirements for implementation of the items covered under this Agenda are met through the support available from various sources such as Plan/Non-Plan provisions of the Union Ministries/ Departments, North Eastern Council, Financial Institutions, Non-lapsable Central Pool of Resources.

As regards Jammu & Kashmir, announcements were made by the then Prime Minister on floor of Parliament on 23rd July, 1996 and 2nd August, 1996 and also made a statement at Jammu on 14th February 1997 regarding various programmes/schemes/projects for the economic development of the State. The Financial requirement for the items covered under these announcements are met through the Budgets of the concerned Union Ministries/Departments and also through additional funding from the Central Government under the State Plan.

Poverty alleviation programmes

3925. SHRI K. KALAVENKATA RAO: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the poverty alleviation programmes taken up for tackling poverty during 2002-2003; and

(b) the other steps taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) and (b) During 2002-2003 the major ongoing anti-poverty programmes, namely Swarnjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY), Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojana (SGRY) and Swaran Jayanti Shahri Rozgar Yojana (SJSRY) would continue to be implemented. While the